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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/48/632/Add.2)]

48/131. Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/146 of 15 December 1989, 45/150 of 18 December 1990, and especially 46/137 of 17 December 1991 and 47/138 of 18 December 1992, as well as the annex to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1989/51 of 7 March 1989, 1/

Bearing in mind the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 2/ adopted by the World Conference of Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, especially the recognition therein that assistance provided upon the request of Governments for the conduct of free and fair elections, including assistance in the human rights aspects of elections and public information about elections, is of particular importance in the strengthening and building of institutions relating to human rights and the strengthening of a pluralistic civil society, and that special emphasis should be given to measures that assist in achieving those goals; 3/

Reaffirming that electoral assistance is provided only at the specific request of the Member State concerned,

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1/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1989, Supplement No. 2 (E/1989/20), chap. II, sect. A.

2/ A/CONF/157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

3/ Ibid., sect. II, para. 67.

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Having considered the report of the Secretary-General, 4/

Noting the high level of requests for electoral assistance by Member States,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General 4/ on United Nations activities aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections;

2. Commends the electoral assistance provided to Member States at their request by the United Nations, requests that such assistance continue on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the proposed guidelines on electoral assistance, recognizing that the fundamental responsibility for ensuring free and fair elections lies with Governments, and also requests the Electoral Assistance Unit of the Secretariat to inform Member States on a regular basis about the requests received, the responses given to those requests and the nature of the assistance provided;

3. Requests that the United Nations attempt to ensure, before undertaking to provide electoral assistance to a requesting State, that there is adequate time to organize and carry out an effective mission for providing such assistance, that conditions exist to allow a free and fair election and that provisions can be made for adequate and comprehensive reporting of the results of the mission;

4. Recommends that the United Nations, in order to ensure the continuation and consolidation of the democratization process in Member States requesting assistance, provide assistance before and after elections have taken place, including needs-assessment missions aimed at recommending programmes which might contribute to the consolidation of the democratization process;

5. Recalls the establishment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Trust Fund for Electoral Observation and the establishment by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme of a separate fund, the Trust Fund for Technical Assistance to Electoral Processes, and calls upon Member States to consider contributing to the funds;

6. Stresses the importance of coordination by the focal point within the United Nations system, commends the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat for the advisory services and technical assistance it provides and the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme for the technical assistance they provide to requesting Member States, and requests the focal point to strengthen its collaboration with the Centre for Human Rights, including through an exchange of personnel when appropriate, and with the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and the United Nations Development Programme, and inform them of requests submitted in the area of electoral assistance;

4/ A/48/590.

7. Recommends that the United Nations continue and strengthen its coordination of election preparation and observation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations which have an interest in such activities;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to provide the Electoral Assistance Unit with adequate human and financial resources, under the regular budget of the United Nations and within existing resources, to allow it to carry out its mandate;

9. Also requests the Secretary-General to reinforce the Centre for Human Rights through the redeployment of resources and personnel, so as to enable it to answer, in close coordination with the Electoral Assistance Unit, the increasing number of requests from Member States for advisory services in the area of electoral assistance;

10. Recommends that, on the basis of the guidelines proposed in his report 5/ and on the basis of experience acquired over the last two years, the Secretary-General provide a revised set of guidelines for consideration at its forty-ninth session;

11. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the implementation of resolution 47/138 and the present resolution, in particular on the status of requests from Member States for electoral assistance and verification, and on the validity of the guidelines in the light of experience.

85th plenary meeting
20 December 1993

5/ A/47/668 and Corr.1 and Add.1.